

Baltimore & Ohio Railroad: Mount Royal Station
Baltimore
Baltimore County
Maryland

HAER No. MD-10

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad: Mount Royal Station

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Location: 1400 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, Baltimore City, Maryland

Dates of Construction: 1894-96; remodeled 1965

Builder/Designer: Baldwin & Pennington, architects

Original Use: Depot

Current Use: Art school/museum

Present Owners: The Maryland Institute
1300 Mount Royal Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland

Significance: When it opened in 1896, the Mount Royal Station was one of the best examples of the harmonious blending of engineering and aesthetic values in an urban environment. Sited at the north end of the Howard Street Tunnel, entirely within the open cut between it and the Mount Royal Tunnel, it was both unobtrusive and convenient. The shelter provided by this below-grade site made the Mount Royal Depot a hospitable embarkation point in foul weather. The city of Baltimore used the depot as its official welcoming point to greet distinguished visitors, including several presidents, British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, Cardinal Gibbons, and Queen Marie of Romania.

The station building consists of a central block seven bays wide and two and a half stories high, flanked on either side by a three-bay wing of three stories. It is of Italian Renaissance design, constructed of granite, trimmed in limestone, and reminiscent of the facade of the Vendramini Palace in Venice. A clock tower, 143 feet high, projects from the center bay and is fronted by a small porte-cochere marking the main entrance. The site is unusual in its location in a depression between two tunnels, yet does not appear sunken or insignificant because of the dominant clock tower. The clock's illuminated face houses an 8-day pendulum clock manufactured by E. Howard of Boston. The main architectural feature in the interior of the building is a two story waiting room which occupied the entire front of the central block. Upper floors contained the railroad's offices.

Significance, cont'd. In 1966, when the structure was remodelled as an art school, the interior floor space was increased by constructing a second floor in the vaulted waiting room, leaving the center as a lobby and preserving the massive columns, stamped metal ceilings, mosaic marble floors and most of the decorative ironwork. The character of the exterior remains virtually unchanged, although the rear waiting platform and the baggage room have been enclosed to make space for a sculpture studio containing a foundry for casting bronze and a kiln.

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Transmitted by: Jean Yearby, HAER, 1984, from data compiled by Dennis M. Zembala, Historian, 1970